

'Scheme Against Those Who Help Inventors'

Attorney Charges U.S. Patent Office Intercepted and Answered His Mail

By Stuart Auerbach 3/20/64

Washington Post Staff Writer

An attorney complained to a Senate subcommittee yesterday that his client's mail had been intercepted—and even answered—by the U.S. Patent Office.

Louis Grossman, the attorney, backed up his charges by presenting to the Senate Judiciary subcommittee on administrative practice and procedure copies of answers the Patent Office sent to persons who had written his client.

He called the "mail tampering... a scheme by the Patent Bar with the Assistance of the U. S. Patent Office to do away with people who help inventors." At which point the committee chairman, Sen. Edward V. Long (D-Mo.) commented, "They seem to operate a closed shop over there."

Later he promised a close look at Patent Office procedures.

A representative of the Patent Office present at the hearing, Solicitor Joseph

Schimmel, refused comment when invited to make a statement. He did say he would answer any questions put to him by the committee, but none was.

Later, he refused to comment to a reporter when asked about Grossman's charge.

Grossman said his client, H. Lawrence Blasius, operates the Washington Patent Office Search Bureau at 711 14th st. nw. and serves as an adviser to inventors seeking patents.

He was a registered patent agent for ten years, but lost his registration when he continued advertising in spite of

See PATENT, A7, Col. 1



United Press International

LOUIS GROSSMAN
...charges letter-tampering

new regulations prohibiting registered agents from placing ads.

"Much of our client's mail is being deliberately missent to the United States Patent Office before being delivered to its (his client's) office, even though the attention of the postal authorities has been brought to this fact," Grossman said.

Post Office officials, he added, blamed the missent mail on the fact that the Patent Office maintained an "overflow office" in the same building as Blasius's former office, 1426 G st. nw.

A check showed this to be false, Grossman said. He said the Patent Office rented space at 1406 G st. nw.

Exhibits Letter

Besides, he added, letters to Blasius's firm continued to end up at the Patent Office even after the business moved to its present address.

"They were lying to you?" interjected Sen. Long.

"That's right," said Gross-

man. "It was a deliberate falsehood."

Pulling letters from a well-stocked briefcase, Grossman exhibited one sent to a Michigan man who wished to use Blasius's firm. It came from a member of the Patent Office staff identified as S. William Cochran, a law examiner.

In it, the Patent Office returned a check meant for Blasius and wrote the Michigan man:

"You would be well advised to obtain a registered patent attorney or agent."

The letter also included a list of patent attorneys or agents in his state.

Grossman said he complained to C. W. Moore, who has since retired as solicitor of the Patent Office. Moore, Grossman continued, answered that the Patent Office had done nothing wrong and would do what it had again if needed.

'Similarity' Blamed

Grossman then pulled out letters received during correspondence with J. Herbert Holloman, assistant secretary of

commerce.

In the first letter Grossman read to the committee, Holloman blamed the similarity in names and addresses between the Patent Office and Blasius's firm for the missent mail. Once in the Patent Office, Holloman continued, it is hard to stop the letters from being opened.

But he assured Grossman that no more letters meant for Blasius's company would be answered by Patent Office officials.

Then Grossman wrote back and asked if Moore would be punished for his past activities.

Holloman answered that no disciplinary action would be taken because of Moore's 40 years of service to the Patent Office.

Events Took Place in 1964

"This hardly seems enough justification to warrant and condone such outrageous conduct," said Grossman.

"That's typical of the brotherhood that exists among certain bureaucracies," answered Long.

Grossman said this "mail tampering" took place in 1964, while the U. S. attorney for the Southern District of New York was investigating Blasius for a possible mail fraud indictment.

This never was brought, but Blasius told a reporter that an information is pending in the Federal court charging him with unauthorized practice as a registered patent agent.